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TWO WORDS OF COUNSEL,

AND

ONE OF COMFORT.

ADDRESSED TO

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE PRINCE OF WALES.

K. George IV., King of G.B. & I.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

TWO WORDS

OF

COUNSEL, &c.

SIR,

THE following pages will not contain the language of acrimony and reproach; while they are dedicated to truth, they will not be found to violate decorum; and though they may not be altogether devoted to panegyric, they shall not be made the disgraceful and odious vehicle of coarse and calumniating censure. They will convey, with the best intentions from me, and the most anxious solicitude for your Royal Highness, a mingled offering of counsel and of consolation, in the very expressions which I

should employ, were I qualified to be called to a private audience at Carlton House, in the present singular and affecting posture of your affairs.

I need not inform you, Sir, that the circumstances which at this moment involve your Royal Highness, are so peculiar, so unexampled, and, considered in certain points of view, so alarming, that the attention of the country has been seduced from the extraordinary state of Europe, and even its own critical position in it, to fix itself almost altogether and entirely on you.

How much of the conversation of the people of Great Britain you have of late engrossed, as well as the nature of it, must have been conveyed to your Royal Highness. The hopes which the enemies of our constitution have appeared to derive, and the alarms which the friends of it have openly expressed, from your conduct and situation, have not only reached

the inmost recesses of your palace, but, as I should hope, of your heart. Both these descriptions of people have rested their expectations on you: the downfall of the British government has been represented by the one, and the maintenance of it has been considered by the other, as depending upon the folly or the wisdom of your future life.

But this is not all: a blow has been aimed at monarchy throughout Europe: one of its greatest and most amiable sovereigns has been torn from his throne, and inhumanly butchered by his subjects, while the potentates of the surrounding kingdoms looked with alarm on this sad catastrophe, without the means to delay or prevent it: an outcry against kings and powers has been raised in our quarter of the globe, and rang throughout it; while in this kingdom, where monarchy appears with so amiable an aspect; where

its power is so moderated, and its character so blended as to give no other ideas of government but those of protection and justice, and to possess no splendour but such as transfers a mild dignity to the throne;—at a time also when that monarchy appeared to clothe a personage who loves his people, who blends with public care the private virtues; whose court encourages no profligacy, and whose palace exhibits an exemplary scene of domestic excellence;—at such a time, evil spirits rose up with a diabolical intent to disseminate their horrid principles through this happy country; and finding very powerful obstacles to their abominable designs in the virtues of the reigning Monarch, they endeavoured to strengthen their arguments, and heighten the delusion of their projects, by seducing, in what manner I shall not repeat, the attention of the people to his apparent

successor. In short, Sir, I again assert, and it cannot be too often asserted to your Royal Highness, that the friends of this country look to you as the principal support of its future happiness; and that its enemies, by a sad fatality which I cannot describe, have dared to look to the same object, and nourish the hope of its destruction. As for myself, I cannot find words to express how much I think the welfare of Great Britain and the honour of the British name depend upon your Royal Highness; nor will I now venture to trust myself with the discussion of a question which would involve circumstances, that, I trust, will soon be remembered no more.

In the present unparalleled and alarming situation of the world; amid such a state of moral as well as political convulsion, I have one consolation, and it is the greatest which any inhabitant of Europe can possess, of being a subject of Great

Britain. I feel the pre-eminent advantage of living in a country where true freedom is understood and enjoyed, where every man receives the personal protection, which wise and powerful laws can give him; where there is no power so strong as to rob him of his property, or interrupt his enjoyment of it, without risking the vengeance of that potent justice, which is ever ready to support innocence and punish oppression. Grateful, therefore, as I am to the country where I receive such blessings, and to the constitution, which, while it lasts, will preserve them to me, I look with the utmost alarm to those circumstances, whatever they may be, which threaten it with injury, and with the most anxious hope to whatever tends to support and maintain it.——My apprehensions, Sir, do not cross the British Channel; I fear nothing from the savage rashness of the insensate and ungovernable spirit of the French

people. There is bravery and patriotism enough in this kingdom to resist them, if in a mad, enthusiastic moment, they were to attempt that inroad into this country, which they have so often threatened, but threatened in vain. I derive no fear from the propagation of democratic or infidel opinions; there is loyalty enough among us to oppose the one, with good sense, and, I will add, religion, enough to overwhelm the other. While the people are satisfied with the government under which they live, and the British people, thank God, are not easily seduced into dissatisfaction; while the government is in a state of exertion for the general good, and the Sovereign is the father of his people, there can be no reason to fear the public prosperity and happiness of Great Britain. The present ministers, I trust, are doing the best that can be done in the extraordinary circumstances that influence the affairs of the

world; while your Father fills every wish that can gratify the loyalty of a nation which he governs with a paternal care. It is, indeed, his character as a man, as well as his conduct as a sovereign, that has in a great measure preserved us from being more materially involved than we have been in the calamities of surrounding nations. When one of the brightest thrones in the world has been laid in the dust, by the very people, who, following the example of their ancestors, for so many centuries, had practised such a submissive allegiance and animated devotion to it; when the kings and princes of the neighbouring countries and states trembled for their power; and when a very large part of Europe had been taught to consider the regal character with diminished respect; when the higher and lower classes of the people had been every where brought nearer to each other, and those distinctions, on

which social happiness so much depends, began to lose their bold outline in the general picture of political society;—we, Sir, of this country continued still to look towards the throne of it with unvarying loyalty; and while crowns were shaking on the heads of other kings, Britons were ready to expend their lives and fortunes in maintaining that which receives lustre from the brow of a British sovereign.

In short, Sir, in the temper and disposition which has of late prevailed through Europe, the stability of all the established governments depends almost, if not altogether, upon the conduct and character of their respective Princes; and I have no doubt, in declaring my opinion, that if our present Monarch had been a bad man, and consequently a bad king, this country, if it had not changed its form of government, would have been convulsed to the centre, in the exertions made to preserve it: though I am dis-

posed to think, that, under the circumstance of a profligate, extravagant, and, of course, an oppressive sovereign, it would not have been possible to have preserved it; at least in that state of internal comfort, peace, and security, which distinguishes it at this moment from every other country in the world. The surly arrogance of James the First, the profligacy of the Second Charles, and the weak superstition of his successor, would at this time have materially changed the aspect of the British nation, if they had not shaken the very pillars of its boasted constitution.

At all times it is the duty and interest of a sovereign prince, to hold forth an example of virtue to his people, and to conciliate, by an active attention to the public interest, and a display of those qualities which constitute private excellence, the love and confidence of the people he is called to govern. But there

are times and occasions,—I repeat, Sir, there are times and occasions, of such a peculiar and awakening nature, that if a sense of duty should have lost its influence in the breast of a prince, the suggestions of policy would supply its place, and produce the good effects of superior emotions; and such a time is passing by us, and with such occasions are we surrounded.

But wise and reflecting men do not rest alone upon the fortune and favourable circumstances of the present moment; they look also to the future: and the people of this country, when they reflect that their present Sovereign is not immortal, look with anxious solicitude to the qualities of his successor: they wish to elevate, to concentrate, and confirm their hopes, by the contemplation of such an object; and I trust, Sir, they will find that object in you.

You, Sir, would be the first to despise the adulation, were I to tell you, that your past years have altogether satisfied the wishes of the nation. You must well know, (without my entering on the unwelcome task of repeating circumstances and detailing events, which, I trust, you will soon induce the public to remember no more,) that you have not. The deliberations of the House of Commons have told it to the nation at large. The early errors of life, the vivacity of the passions, with the various and fond indulgence of them, may be more readily excused in a youthful Prince of Wales, than in another man; in proportion to the temptations that surround him, the arts employed to seduce him, and the facility with which his wishes, however irregular, may be gratified. But the time will come, when the pardonable period of life for these things will be passed; when it is impossible for folly to possess a grace,

and when errors will be criminal in proportion to the elevated rank of the person who is guilty of them. To say that this period is arrived, and brings the most sacred claims upon you along with it, is to speak in terms of moderation, which I doubt not you will justify.

The political character of the Heir Apparent to the Crown of Great Britain is rather of a negative than a positive nature: he is in a kind of intermediate state, between the people he is one day to govern, and the throne on which he will govern them; and he should be continually preparing himself for the duties of sovereignty, as he knows not when he may be called to the exercise of them. In such a situation he has leisure and opportunity to acquire the qualifications requisite for his future character, as well as for obtaining that knowledge of men and things, of the constitution of

the country, and conduct of government, as will fit him to enter at once and with effect on the exercise of regal power, whenever he shall succeed to it. In short, he should employ his principal attention in studying the political map of the country over which he is born to reign; so that when it comes to be his own, he may not depend upon the knowledge of others as a rule of his conduct, but be qualified to act from himself. In this state, the crown which is his inheritance should be always in his contemplation, not as an object which he is over anxious to possess, but for whose possession he is determined to be prepared. It must, however, be remembered, that the act of preparation for the crown of a great empire is a progress of dignity, and will not admit of ordinary avocations, of vulgar conduct, or enervating dissipations. The approach to a palace should partake of the magnificence of the build-

ing to which it leads: no filth or dirt, or trifling object, or tinsel decoration, should be seen in a royal avenue, whose character should gradually mark, and by degrees unfold, the majesty of the edifice to which it belongs.

Though a Prince of Wales must be necessarily involved in form and ceremony, though the dignity of his rank requires somewhat of exterior grandeur, his political character should remain in a state of tranquillity; and the lustre of his private life should be derived from the accomplishments of superior education, ennobled by acts of munificence, the patronage of learning, and those exterior decorums which form a part of the duties of morality, and receive an added grace from a sense of religion.

He should disdain to take the least share in party agitations; with party disputes he has nothing to do: nay, he disgraces himself, endangers his charac-

ter, and risks the loss of political importance, if he mingles in them. A calm acquiescence in the measures of government is his duty; and a violent opposition to them is not only unbecoming in him, but too often replete with mischief to the country. An opposition party, by which I mean that set of men who oppose ministry, in order to get their places and emoluments, will ever feel themselves strengthened by the support of an Heir Apparent to the crown; and if they can flatter him into a belief of their opinions, or seduce him into a support of their measures, they certainly do obtain a degree of consequence from having such a nominal protection, though to the dishonour and hazard of their protector.—I will explain myself.

The moment a Prince of Wales engages in a party in opposition, and he can engage in no other, he surrounds himself with men whose interest it is

to please him by any means in their power to offer; who will encourage him in every wayward wish, indulge him in every pleasurable gratification, promote every extravagant disposition, separate him from the court of his sovereign, and deceive him into that kind of distress, which shall make him as it were dependent upon them, or at least so involved with them, as to render it a matter of extreme difficulty to break from them. Has he any favourite object to obtain, however detrimental to his private character, however inconsistent with his political situation, however offensive to his father, and disgusting to the people, he finds among his party the panders of his wishes; whose sophistry will find excuses for him, when he knows not how to frame them for himself. To make him answer their views, they will support him in all his private pleasures, while they endeavour to persuade him, that he ought

to seize the important interval, before he is excluded by the formalities of sovereignty from mingling with the people, to acquire that view of men and manners, which is called a knowledge of the world, and that insight into common life, which will give him such peculiar advantage over his predecessors in the art of government, when he is called to succeed them.

I need not enlarge further on the subject of party to your Royal Highness, who know so much of it:—party politics, party arrangements, party dinners, and party dissipation, must, I fear, be very familiar to your recollection: and what knowledge, Sir, did you acquire from them that has been useful to your head or your heart, as a man or a prince? But if we descend from the political circle, and mix with those instructive amusements in which you were encouraged; let me ask you, what improvement you derived from

Newmarket? what new and better feelings were instilled into your heart by the splendid festivities of Carlton House, and the frolic dissipation of other houses; or the more easy and elegant recreations of the Pavilion? Did you learn rigid morality from Charles Fox, artless simplicity from Mr. Sheridan, and mild benevolence from Mr. Grey? or did you acquire any addition to the natural gracefulness of your manners, and the charm of your behaviour, from the inferior, but not less familiar, friends, who enlivened the orgies of the night, or directed the drives of the morning?—In short, Sir, let me ask you one serious question, and I wish you to repeat it to yourself, Whether you do not in a great measure, if not altogether, owe your present embarrassed and mortifying situation to your former political connections? I think, Sir, without any presumption on my part,

that I may consider you as indebted to them for such an advantage: and if so, you need not wonder at their conduct in the deliberations of parliament on your subject. They never, Sir, can forgive your escape from their influence, or as they call it, a desertion of friends, to whose support you had so solemnly pledged yourself. Indeed I cannot but observe, that those who employ the most artful opinions concerning you, at the present moment, are the very men who formerly sat at your table; while those who are the loudest in their scurrility against you, are such as have been fed by the crumbs which fell from it. You have tasted the sweets and the bitters of party; you have shared its hopes, and lamented its disappointments; you have found yourself in a small minority in a division in parliament; and you are instructed in all the forms of party

councils, from a Westminster election committee to the deliberative assemblies of Burlington House.

But acquainted as you are with the progress of party, you cannot be insensible to the changes of it. Alas, Sir, what are the transformations of that political cohort which you protected with all your protection, and strengthened with all your strength! how divided, and shattered, and changed it is, since the golden dreams of a regency had so firmly bound them to you.—The Duke of Portland is become a secretary of state; Lord Loughborough has risen to the object of his wishes on the Chancery bench; Mr. Wyndham is employing his superior talents, and exerting his rigid integrity in the war department of administration; while Mr. Fox, degraded by an eleemosynary support from men, the best of whom have deserted him, is a melancholy example of the inefficacy of great

talents, when they are not sustained by popular character: Mr. Sheridan is alternately changing the despotism of a theatre for the democracy of politics; while Messrs. Grey and Whitbread continue their habitual and darling office of endeavouring to irritate and perplex a minister.

If your own experience were not sufficient to sicken you of parties, I should recommend you to amuse yourself with an occasional reading of the late Lord Melcombe's Diary, where you will see the history of that party which was supported by your royal grandfather. They were a very different set of men, in talents, character, and fortune, from that which was honoured by your protection, and were engaged in opposition to an administration very inferior to that which conduct the present government; yet, you will there see the small portion of honour derived to a Prince of Wales,

and the similar advantage acquired by the country, from their political conduct. The disunion of the royal family, the private distresses of Leicester House, cabals, jealousies, and heart-burnings among the lesser juntos, will appear to compose the picture of that party, which was not enlivened by one ray of patriotism, and where the real welfare of the country did not check the views of interest, or the ardour of ambition for a moment. At the same time, though the objects of your grandfather's party were pretty much the same as those which animated your political adherents, it possessed a dignity, and was conducted with a degree of decorum which did not form the characteristics of that opposition which you condescended to sanction with your private wishes, and parliamentary suffrage. When I admonish you, therefore, to have nothing more to do with party, I doubt not but you

have already made that determination, and will keep it.

But there are other considerations of the most serious importance, which claim, if they do not already possess, your most serious attention. And in order to come at once to the subject, let me ask your Royal Highness, to what causes you attribute the desolation of France, and the awful situation of Europe? If you hesitate a moment in the answer, I will tell you,—to the licentiousness of a court, and the vices of the great. We know what the manners of the nobility of France and the higher orders of its ecclesiastics were previous to the downfall of that monarchy. If there had been any thing of moral decorum in the one, or of piety in the other, there would have been no revolution. If the bonds of religion and morality had not been unloosed among the leading classes of the people from one end of that devoted kingdom to the other;

if profligacy of manners had not been an uniform, or at least a very predominating feature among its numerous nobility; if a fastidious pride, a love of ostentation and pomp, and an unceremonious enjoyment of sensual pleasures, had not supplied the place of piety, among its superior clergy,—that nobility would not now have been reduced to beggary at home, or be living on the charity of foreign countries; nor would the Gallican church have been annihilated as it now is, nor the Christian religion have received so deep a wound by that impiety, which laid in the dust so large a portion of the Christian world.

I shall contrast these sentiments concerning the vices of France, with the virtues of Great Britain; nor do I hesitate to maintain an opinion, that the stock of virtue there is in this country has preserved it. It must, indeed, be

acknowledged that luxury, an enervating, seducing, and debasing power, has lately made great strides among us; but, though it may have caused some change in the national manners, it has not yet affected the sterling worth of the national character. If we turn our eyes alone towards the various subscriptions which, during the war, have solicited the public attention, we shall there see British benevolence inscribed in immortal characters; while the private charities, which come within the scope of every one's experience, are sufficient to produce and confirm an opinion of the general mass of it, which blends with every part of this pre-eminent nation. The babbling, frothy rill of public dissipation, which seeks the populous city, is every where heard throughout its course; while the deep, still stream of private worth flows gently on, unheard; and in those secret recesses, which are not visible to

the vulgar eye, is scarcely known but to those who feel its influence.

When the partizans of democracy pointed out the vices of the French court, as the uncontrollable cause of the French revolution; we looked exultingly to our own, and saw the virtues there. When the disciples of infidelity gave the irregular lives and irreligious conduct of the superior orders of the French clergy, as a motive to the destruction of the Christian religion in France, we looked to our bishops, and saw a body of learned, pious men, who preserve the dignity of their station, and live in a suitable attention to the decorum of the episcopal character. When the universal wreck of the French nobility is justified by their scandalous lives and profligate characters, we may look with confidence to a long roll of persons of noble birth, and commoners of large fortune, who do honour to their stations, and employ their wealth

as becomes them. For though it is the common prattle of folly, the cant of hypocrisy, and the outcry of envy, that the rich and great are in general destitute of private honour or public virtue; and though it is the constant practice of bad men, by calumny, misrepresentation, and mischievous opinion, to aim not only at bringing down the good and great to their own infamous level, but to involve, if possible, the whole human race in one common guilt; I am not afraid to risk the assertion, that the mass of private worth in this country, which truly ennobles nobility, and dignifies persons of fashion and fortune, greatly preponderates in every part of it. When to palliate those more than atrocious enormities in France, which ended in the murder of Louis the Sixteenth, it became necessary to arraign the regal character, and to make King and Tyrant, Monarchy and Despotism, convertible terms, we looked to the British

throne, and see a Prince seated on it, who has no wishes beyond the happiness of his people, and who reigns over the great family of the nation with the same affection which distinguishes every office of his domestic life.

If, therefore, a vicious court, and a profligate nobility, have been, in a great measure, the combined cause of the French revolution, and if a virtuous court, and the national stock of British virtue, have preserved to this country its government, laws, and constitution; how much, Sir, it behoves your Royal Highness, on the principles of self-interest and policy, as well as duty, to maintain, support, and encourage, by your conduct and example, the national character; and, by a decorous as well as dignified demeanour, to deprive the enemies of our country and government of any hope, that your succession to the crown will produce that relaxation of national vir-

tue, which leads to national depravity, and ends in national ruin.

Whatever operates to the general degradation of royalty must be essentially injurious to the interests of princes; and whatever tends to lessen its character in this country, where it forms a part of the constitution, must be very alarming to every branch of that Royal Family which are in the hereditary succession of it. If the veneration and respect for royalty should, at any time, be lost in Great Britain, those distinctions, which have so long united to form the basis of our excellent constitution, would soon be annihilated, and, on their downfall, anarchy would instantly arise, to destroy the most perfect system of public happiness that ever adorned and blessed the world.

I do not fear to inform you, Sir, that a Prince of Wales who should encourage a licentiousness of manners, or by any

degrading misconduct raise that general spirit of discontent, which would produce these effects, is not merely guilty of a *felo de se*, but of a degree of parricide, as much more enormous than the former crime, as the destruction of a whole people is more criminal than the murder of any individual subject of the empire. If it should be asked, what species of conduct can the Heir Apparent of a free people pursue, to produce such fatal consequences? I will answer—that extravagance, dissipation, and debauchery, an association with the worst and most abandoned characters, an indulgence in low and profligate pleasures, a disdain of exterior decorum, and a mockery of religion, when unhappily blended in such a character, will tend, in the best of times, to produce very fatal effects; but, in the present situation of the world, will, if continued to a certain point, inevitably produce them.

The irregularities and indiscretions of your past life have brought you into a situation, that must have affected your mind with the most poignant dissatisfaction. You are become the subject of general discussion among all ranks of people, from one end of the island to the other; and the manner in which your character has been dissected cannot be unknown to you. The moment that is passing by you presents an awful lesson for your conduct; and the instructions which may be drawn from it will, I trust, be of infinite use to you in every part of your future life.

To present your distresses to the cognizance and examination of Parliament, and consequently to hold them forth to the awakened, and not very favourable, attention of the nation, was a measure, I fear, of dire necessity, and might have been attended with very serious consequences, if the House of Commons had

not proceeded with that caution, dignity, and attention to the public interest, which has secured, as it so well deserves, the public confidence. The conduct of Parliament, on the important occasion, has been at once temperate, independent, and constitutional. It has considered the dignity of your character, as well as the change in your domestic situation; and has provided for the due maintenance of the one, as well as the necessary support of the other. It has regarded your errors with indulgence; and though they have brought you into a situation that is very grievous to the country, and distressing to government, Parliament has acted neither with anger or resentment; but, like a fond parent, corrects past faults by future restraint, and marks out the path, which will lead your Royal Highness to private comfort and public honour. I have never been one of those whose discontent is continually break-

ing forth, and joining the outcry for parliamentary reformation; but from the present conduct of the House of Commons I am more than ever convinced that the constitution does not want it.

It has been said, indeed, by many of those who wish to be considered as your friends, and as the supporters of government; as well as by some who, I believe, are real friends to neither, that the minister should have refused to bring forward the business of your Royal Highness's embarrassments to the attention of Parliament: nay, that he should have rather resigned his high office, than have proposed measures, which while they must expose, as it were by authority, your errors to the disapprobation of the people, threatened the country with new burthens, to emancipate you from the consequences of them. But even supposing, which, however, I by no means believe, that Mr. Pitt

was in such an alternative; I have very much mistaken his character if he would submit to base compliances, to retain his official station. On the contrary, I conceive that he acted under the impression of those peculiar circumstances in which your Royal Highness was involved, to snatch royalty from its degraded state, and to call Parliament to engage in the task of its renovation. I have no doubt, Sir, that, with a dutiful solicitude for your personal happiness, he felt a proportionate anxiety for your political dignity, and that he considered the best interests of the country as most intimately connected with them both. I acknowledge the difficulty of his situation; but he is familiar with difficult situations, and his accustomed magnanimity did not forsake him. Your Royal Highness was either to be left in a state of distress, which was hourly increasing, and threatened you with aggravated in-

convenience and disgrace; or an application was to be made to Parliament to restore you to independence and to yourself. It was, I fear, a choice of evils, and the minister did all he could do on the occasion—he chose the least.

I could wish that your character and conduct had not been brought so forward in the business, nor presented, as it was, to the notice of the public: for this disadvantage, however, you are alone indebted to the zeal of your former friends; but while the nation may have had cause for regret in the retrospective view which was, in one way or other, given of your Royal Highness by them, it has reason to rejoice in the conviction that its representatives, belying the outcry of parliamentary corruption, have proved themselves faithful guardians of the rights and interests of the people.

Mr. Pitt certainly conducted this business with the most delicate attention to

the situation of your Royal Highness. The great and professed object of the minister, and which, I believe, he wished to be considered as the distinguishing feature of his administration, was the diminution of the national debt, by a wise application of the natural resources of the nation: whatever, therefore, might appear to be a deviation from that principle would be adopted by him with the greatest reluctance. When, however, this country was forced by dire necessity, for such I shall ever consider it, to engage in the present war, the minister was obliged to change his course; and, instead of proceeding in his favourite project of lessening the national debt, he was compelled to employ his comprehensive and sagacious mind in discovering the ways and means of adding to it, in a manner the least burthensome to the people. This was a period, when it must have been a very irksome business for him, to

come forwards with the debts of the Prince of Wales to Parliament, and demand a supply for the extinction of them. But how could he avoid it, unless he had resigned his situation in government? which after all would not have prevented the measure from being adopted; nor am I in the humour to imagine, that the prevention of it would have remunerated the country for a momentary resignation of such a minister.

If your Royal Highness manifested a disposition to marry, on what grounds could an opposition be made to your indulgence of it? There were in the court, if not altogether in the ministry, predominant reasons for encouraging you to become stationary in the temple of Hymen; and when that event took place, an arrangement of your affairs became necessary to your domestic comfort, the honour of the country, and the character of royalty. It was the apparent object

of government to bring the business forward, and to conduct it in such a manner as to prevent, if possible, any personal discussion of Prince of Wales: but the opposition, though not with their usual uniformity, partly to embarrass the minister, and partly from pique to your Royal Highness, for having extricated yourself from their political trammels, seized every opportunity to prolong and multiply the debates on the subject, which had not only embarrassed the minister, but must have been inexpressibly unpleasant to your feelings. Mr. Fox, indeed, differed in several points from his co-mates in opposition; but though he was anxious as ever to throw opprobrium on the minister, he has appeared to feel, in some degree, for your situation. Mr. Grey and others were less delicate on the subject; while Mr. Sheridan came forth, as it were, from behind the curtain of Carlton House, and disco-

vered, to his astonished audience, the machinery of the pantomime, without having advertised his extraordinary exhibition in the bills of the day.

If Mr. Pitt had stood in need of popularity, he had an opportunity to acquire it, which, I hope and trust, he will never again possess. If he had thought proper to represent the measure of proposing a liquidation of your debts to Parliament, as dishonourable to the Crown, and injurious to the country, and after having remonstrated in vain on the subject, he had resigned that power which he refused to employ in subservience to your peculiar necessities, the people would have considered him as a sacrifice to his regard for them, and have forced him back, with an accession of character, into the service of George the Third; as his illustrious father had been forced into the service of George the Second. But he does not stand in need of popularity;

and, if he did, I am not disposed to believe that he would practise manœuvres to obtain it.

But this is not all—while the minister was attacked by some for the manner in which he brought forward the affairs of your Royal Highness to the consideration of Parliament, and by others, for bringing them forward at all; while you, Sir, had your share, in one way or other, of party contumely, your royal Father has also been assailed with no common share of insidious severity.

It has been said, that the King should have taken upon himself to discharge your debts, and thereby have saved the nation the expence of paying them, as well as Parliament the trouble of settling them; and have preserved the Prince of Wales from the poignant predicament which has accompanied the public arrangement of them. This idea, supported by declarations of his Majesty's enor-

mous wealth, has been adopted and encouraged by many, who must have known better. The civil list, I most willingly acknowledge, is, and has been, in a better state, and ordered with more regularity, as all the King's domestic servants and tradesmen well know, during Mr. Pitt's administration, than in any former period of the present reign.—But this proves nothing more than the superior care and attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to his Majesty's personal honour and comfort. The wealth which is supposed to be possessed by the King in the public funds, and the savings that he is said to be daily making from his revenues, are the golden dreams of ignorance, or the willing misrepresentations of faction, which the very clerks in certain offices of the Bank and the Exchequer must consider with laughter and contempt. I am not afraid to assert, that the civil list is not more than

adequate to the vast demands which are necessarily made upon it; and whoever will take the trouble to acquire correct information respecting the various application of it to public purposes, to domestic uses, and the regular supplies of his Majesty's privy purse, will not consider me as disposed to make rash and fanciful assertions. But, Sir, if the private treasury of your royal Father was in such a state of overflowing abundance, as to be capable of giving entire and immediate relief to your embarrassed situation; as one of the people, and in that situation of life which feels, to the full as much as any other, the weight of accumulating taxation, I cannot but express my preference that your Royal Highness should be rather relieved by the nation, who is your political parent; whose relief is correction, and, while it relieves, has the power to restrain.

But the fiery ordeal is past: the

wisdom of Parliament, to which you have wisely submitted, has restored you to independence. Though the splendour of your public station may necessarily suffer a temporary mitigation, it is not obscured; and you possess the most enlarged resources of domestic comfort: while the salutary restraint of law will enable you to support the one, without the least infringement on the other. The nation has freed you from embarrassments, which have not only been mortifying to you as Prince of Wales, but painful to you as a man; and I will tell you, Sir, what it expects in return:—It expects a conduct, in which the dignity of the Prince and the worth of the man may be united, and form together a bright and glorious object, for the future gaze of an admiring and enraptured people.

You are now an husband; you may soon be a father; and if the All-powerful

Being, who measures out years at his pleasure, should prolong yours, you may one day be a king, and reign over the greatest people in the world. You are also united to a Princess, of whom all speak with delight and admiration who have the privilege to approach her. She is also the daughter of a sister of our Sovereign; and many are now living, among whom I must include myself, who remember her the ornament of the British court, and distinguished for graceful dignity, amiable manners, and benignant virtue; a reflection, that heightens the interest we may be supposed to take in her royal daughter, whom you have chosen for your consort, and the nation has adopted as its child. She has left her father's house and native country, I doubt not, with every disposition to make you a good wife; nor shall I, for a moment, suspect you of the injustice, I may add, barbarity, of

making her a bad husband. She has every claim to your kindness and respect: she has a right to demand the sacrifice of former attachments and later partialities: the attendants of her court should be composed of ladies the most distinguished for their virtues and accomplishments. Nothing in the form of office and attendance, of state or amusement, of public parade or domestic enjoyment, should be suffered to approach her unaccompanied by the attributes of honour, of innocence, and decorum. For your Royal Highness may be assured, that the nation will express something more than regret, if your inattentions should give her cause to regret the day when she was affianced to you.

But this attention to the honour and happiness of your Royal Consort is involved in an attention to your own. It will, therefore, be considered as something worse than infatuation, if you do

not select your future society from among the first and best men in the kingdom. If persons of high character for worth and talents, for various learning and eminent qualifications, are not preferred in the society of Carlton House, or your provincial retirement, to buffoons, parasites, and panders, to vicious youth or profligate old age.—If you, who can command all rational pleasure, and can summon every thing around you to dignify amusement, should condescend to engage in vulgar relaxations and dissipating pastime, the nation, disappointed in the gratification of its most ardent wishes, will, I fear, attribute such a conduct to that depraved taste and degraded intellect, whose miserable propensity it is to prefer evil to good.

It would be insulting your understanding, to enlarge upon the pernicious consequences produced by the licentious manners of the great. Wickedness in

an individual, or in a nation, may not bring immediate destruction on either; but it never fails to act as a slow poison, that will finally destroy them both. France owes all its accumulated distress and criminal enormity to the profligacy of its higher orders; and the same cause will, more or less, produce the same effects in every other country. In the emphatic language of the sacred volume, "Righteousness exalteth a nation," and in the same proportion, at least, vice and iniquity may be said to debase it. The man in high station, who, careless of the fatal consequences of bad example, continues invariably to present it for imitation, may be considered as a moral traitor, who deserves a far severer punishment than the greater part of those who suffer for the commission of political treason.—Associations may be formed, as they have lately been in this country, to disseminate principles hostile to its go-

vernment; but, as we have also seen, by the vigilance of active and able ministers, such attempts may be frustrated, and their first movers, as well as subsequent abettors, be terrified into obedience and tranquillity. Where, however, the moral sense is once destroyed, and religion has lost its influence, I know of no human power that can coerce luxury, dissipation, and licentiousness; and a people that are become luxurious, dissipated, and licentious, are hastening apace to that state of degeneracy, which debases the public spirit, enervates the national character, and annihilates the sentiment of honour; without which no nation can long maintain that social order, which is the keystone of political happiness.

The people of this country, thank God, still possess a fund of good sense, a diffusion of virtue, a general sentiment of religion, and a spirit of loyalty, which good men consider with hope, and wicked

spirits, I trust, with despair. But, though I believe this to be a true picture of the existing character of the British people, it cannot be altogether denied, that the times are such as to make us fear a depression, rather than expect an elevation, of it. Luxury, it must be confessed, is making hasty advances among us; dissipation is, I fear, an increasing evil;—the inferior classes appear to possess a growing disposition to ape their betters; and the quick transition that prevails from the metropolis to the most remote parts of the kingdom, tends to diminish that simplicity of manners which has so long been the pride and preservative of provincial life. It is impossible, therefore, that your Royal Highness should not perceive the vast importance of good examples, among the great, to the general prosperity of the nation; and that a rich or titled profligate is an enemy to his country. You will also do well to

bear in mind these serious and awful truths:—That even the British people, if (which heaven avert) they should sink into general depravity, would not be worth the governing; and if (which heaven grant) they should retain their virtue, in spite of any contagion, that they would not suffer a profligate prince to govern them: or, at least, would make his crown not worth the wearing.

To err is the lot of human nature; but to persevere in error is the depravation of it; and if your Royal Highness, relieved, as you now are, from the difficulties which oppressed you, should not rise at once into that elevated conduct and display of virtuous dignity which becomes your character, and the nation has a right to expect of you; the people will be disposed to consider you as a man who, having taken to drunkenness to drown his cares, cannot, when those cares are removed, forsake the fatal

habits which they have produced, and, at length, becomes a sacrifice to them.

Nature, Sir, has not been a niggard to you. Your understanding, as I am told, is of a superior class, and if you suffer it to act, free from the guidance of passion and the influence of habit, it will tell you, what are the duties of the prince and the man, and blend them together: it will tell you, that real pleasure was never yet found amid the guilty joys of intemperance; that the laughter created by lewd tales or blasphemous canticles, is the mirth of fools and of demons, and that happiness is only to be found in the paths of virtue and honour.—It will tell you, that this world was not made for you, and will bring continually to your reflection, that there is another world for which you were made; where all the privileges of rank and birth, of wealth and talents, will cease, and virtue will be the only elevating distinction.

I should not think that I fulfilled my duty to your Royal Highness, if I did not entreat you to consider, that the instructions of religion are of more consequence to persons of your high rank than to any others; from the powerful temptations to which they are exposed, from the important consequences that attend their faults; from the contagion of their ill examples; from the necessity of bowing down the stubborn neck of their pride and ambition to the yoke of moderation and virtue; and from a consideration of that ignorance of what it imports men best to know, which, in the opinion of Mr. Burke, prevails at courts, at the head of armies, and in senates, as much as at the loom and in the field.

Religion has also its consolations as well as its instructions, and the great stand in need of them. The prince is no more exempt than the beggar from paying his full contingents of pain and sorrow. In

the very delirium of your pleasures, have you not often found them to be vanity? and the companion of vanity, the wise man has told us, is "vexation of spirit!" —Though you may have much to enjoy, you may have also much to suffer; and you will do well to associate yourself to that benign Power, which can alone pour a sovereign balm into the hurt mind, and comfort the wounded spirit.

It would not only be an idle, an useless, but also an insulting flattery, to tell your Royal Highness that you still possess the enthusiastic affection of the people—That valuable possession is at present suspended.—But I have a word of comfort for you—it may be regained, and continue increasing till it dissolves in tears on your tomb—

Nec lusisse pudet, sed non incidere ludum.

You must throw off the slough of your past life, and come forth in another

and better form than you have yet exhibited to the world. Let a calm and sober lustre decorate your retirement, and make it a state of preparation to return with renovated dignity, amidst applause and admiration, when you shall resume the appropriate splendour of royalty. Give not the democratic spirits any further reason to consider you as their colleague in degrading it. Repose on the bosom of your family; make your wife happy by kindness and affection. Choose your society from among persons of rank, of talents, and of virtue. Let genius, in whatever form it may appear, be favoured with your regard: cultivate benevolence, practise decorum; and no longer forget the duties of religion. Let not a too long familiarity with the misfortunes and horrors of France make you inattentive to them, and the causes which have produced them. Recollect, Sir, that there was a revolution in the sentiments, man-

ners, and moral opinions of the French people, which prepared the way for their destruction. In the political transactions of your country, avoid all parties, and adhere to the throne on which, I implore the great Disposer of all events that you may one day reign, a benign, a virtuous, and a patriot king. — It depends upon yourself, Sir; and the awful alternative is before you, whether the most free, enlightened, and happy people in the world, shall consider your birth as a curse or a blessing.

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